

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A clamping collar comprising an open ring (10), each end of which carries a bearing tab (10A, 10B) provided with a bore (12A, 12B), and tightening means comprising a tightening bolt (14), a nut (16), and a spacer (18, 118), the bolt having a shank (14B) that passes through the bores (12A, 12B) in the bearing tabs and a head (14A) situated beside one of the bearing tabs, the nut being situated beside the other bearing tab, and co-operating with the shank of the bolt, at least a first one (16) of the two elements constituted by the head of the bolt and by the nut being suitable for being driven in rotation so as to tighten the bolt, and the spacer (18, 118) being disposed between said first element and the bearing tab beside which said first element is situated;

~~said clamping collar and being characterized in that the spacer (18, 118) is formed by a rolled-up blank (20) disposed around the shank (14B) of the bolt (14).~~

2. (Currently Amended) A collar according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that wherein~~ the bearing tab (10B) against which the spacer (18, 118) is disposed is provided with a lip (24B) and ~~in that the wherein~~ a join plane (23, 123) between the two ends (21, 22; 121, 122) of the blank (20) from which the spacer is formed is engaged under said lip (24B).

3. (Currently Amended) ~~A collar according to claim 1, wherein a cross-section of said spacer is flattened on a side closer to the ring, in the vicinity of the second end edge of said spacer which co-operates with the bearing tab against which said spacer is disposed. A clamping collar 1 comprising an open ring (10), each end of which carries a bearing tab (10A, 10B) provided with a bore (12A, 12B), and tightening means comprising a tightening bolt (14), a nut (16), and a spacer (18, 118), the bolt having a shank (14B) that passes through the bores (12A, 12B) in the bearing tabs and a head (14A) situated beside one of the bearing tabs, the nut being~~

situated beside the other bearing tab, and co-operating with the shank of the bolt, at least a first one (16) of the two elements constituted by the head of the bolt and by the nut being suitable for being driven in rotation so as to tighten the bolt, and the spacer (18, 118) being disposed between said first element and the bearing tab beside which said first element is situated;

— said clamping collar being characterized in that the spacer (18, 118) presents a first end edge (18A, 118A) co-operating with said first element (16) and a second end edge (18B, 118B) co-operating with the bearing tab (10B) against which the spacer is disposed, the first end edge being substantially perpendicular to the longitudinal direction (D) of the spacer (18, 118) while, at least when the collar is in the tightened state, the second end edge (18B, 118B) is inclined relative to the perpendicular to said longitudinal direction, the inclination (αB) of the second edge (18B, 118B) being such that the length of the spacer increases in the direction going away from the ring of the collar.

4. (Currently Amended) A collar according to claim 31, wherein said collar is provided with wedging means for wedging the spacer so that the latter is prevented from rotating relative to the ring characterized in that the bearing tab (10B) against which the spacer (18, 118) is disposed presents a lip (24B), in that the spacer (18, 118) is formed by a rolled-up blank (20) disposed around the shank (14B) of the bolt (14), and in that the joint plane (23, 123) between the two ends (21, 22; 121, 122) of the blank (20) from which the spacer is formed is engaged under said lip (24B).

5. (Currently Amended) A collar according to claim 1, wherein the bearing tab against which the spacer is disposed has a lip under which the spacer is engaged, and said lip presents at least one rotation-preventing wedging facet which co-operates with a portion of the periphery of the spacer that is not circular claim 3 or 4, characterized in that the spacer (18, 118) is formed by a rolled-up blank (20) disposed around the shank (14B) of the bolt (14), and in that the blank (20) that is rolled up to form the spacer (18) presents a width ($\ell 1, \ell 2$) that varies over the length of said blank.

6. (Currently Amended) A collar according to claim 51, wherein the ring presents a

substantially V-shaped cross-section whose tip projects from an outside periphery of the ring characterized in that the blank (20) that is rolled up to form the spacer (18) presents a maximum width ((ℓ1) in the vicinity of the join plane (23) between its ends (21, 22).

7. (Currently Amended) A collar according to claim 1, wherein an inside periphery of the spacer defines a channel whose height as measured in a plane in which the bearing tabs come towards each other while the collar is being tightened, is greater than a diameter of the shank of the bolt~~any one of claims 3 to 6~~, characterized in that the spacer (118) is deformable over a portion of its periphery in its length direction.

8. (Currently Amended) A collar according to claim 7, wherein the height of the channel is at least equal to 1.2 times the diameter of the shank of the bolt~~characterized in that, before the collar is tightened, the spacer (118) presents a transverse slot (130) that extends over a portion of the periphery of the spacer situated on the side closer to the ring of the collar (10) and that is suitable for closing up at least in part when the collar is tightened.~~

9. (Currently Amended) A clamping collar comprising an open ring, each end of which carries a bearing tab provided with a bore, and tightening means comprising a tightening bolt, a nut, and a spacer, the bolt having a shank that passes through the bores in the bearing tabs and a head situated beside one of the bearing tabs, the nut being situated beside the other bearing tab, and co-operating with the shank of the bolt, at least a first one of the two elements constituted by the head of the bolt and by the nut being suitable for being driven in rotation so as to tighten the bolt, and the spacer being disposed between said first element and the bearing tab beside which said first element is situated, the spacer presenting a first end edge co-operating with said first element and a second end edge co-operating with the bearing tab against which the spacer is disposed, the first end edge being substantially perpendicular to a longitudinal direction of the spacer while, at least when the collar is in a tightened state, the second end edge is inclined relative to a perpendicular to said longitudinal direction, an inclination of the second end edge being such that a length of the spacer increases in a direction going away from the ring of the collar~~A collar according to any one of claims 1 to 8, characterized in that the cross-section of~~

said spacer (18) is flattened on the side closer to the ring (10), in the vicinity of its second end edge (18B) which cooperates with the bearing tab (10B) against which said spacer is disposed.

10. (Currently Amended) A collar according to claim 9, wherein the bearing tab against which the spacer is disposed presents a lip, and wherein the spacer is formed by a rolled-up blank disposed around the shank of the bolt, and a join plane between two ends of the blank from which the spacer is formed is engaged under said lip~~A collar according to any one of claims 1 to 9, characterized in that it is provided with wedging means (19A, 19B, 19C; 25A, 25B, 25C) for wedging the spacer (18) so that it is prevented from rotating relative to the ring (10).~~

11. (Currently Amended) A collar according to claim 9, wherein the spacer is formed by a rolled-up blank disposed around the shank of the bolt, said blank being rolled up to form the spacer and presenting a width that varies over a length of said blank~~A collar according to claim 10, characterized in that the bearing tab (10B) against which the spacer (18) is disposed has a lip (24B) under which the spacer is engaged, and in that said lip presents at least one rotation-preventing wedging facet (25A, 25B, 25C) which co-operates with a portion (19A, 19B, 19C) of the periphery of the spacer that is not circular.~~

12. (Currently Amended) A collar according to claim 11, wherein the blank that is rolled up to form the spacer presents a maximum width in the vicinity of a join plane between two ends of said blank~~A collar according to any one of claims 1 to 11, characterized in that the ring (10) presents a substantially V-shaped cross-section whose tip (11C) projects from the outside periphery of the ring.~~

13. (Currently Amended) A collar according to claim 9, wherein the spacer is deformable over a portion of a periphery thereof, in a length direction thereof~~A collar according to any one of claims 1 to 12, characterized in that the inside periphery of the spacer defines a channel (28) whose height (H) as measured in the plane (PA) in which the bearing tabs come towards each other while the collar is being tightened, is greater than the diameter (d) of the shank (14B) of the bolt (14).~~

14. (Currently Amended) A collar according to claim 13, wherein the spacer is formed by a rolled-up blank disposed around the shank of the bolt ~~characterized in that the height of the channel (28) is at least equal to 1.2 times the diameter (d) of the shank (14B) of the bolt (14).~~

15. (New) A collar according to claim 13, wherein, before the collar is tightened, the spacer presents a transverse slot that extends over a portion of the periphery of the spacer situated on a side closer to the ring of the collar and that is suitable for closing up at least in part when the collar is tightened.

16. (New) A collar according to claim 9, wherein a cross-section of said spacer is flattened on a side closer to the ring, in the vicinity of the second end edge of said spacer which co-operates with the bearing tab against which said spacer is disposed.

17. (New) A collar according to claim 9, wherein said collar is provided with wedging means for wedging the spacer so that the latter is prevented from rotating relative to the ring.

18. (New) A collar according to claim 9, wherein the bearing tab against which the spacer is disposed has a lip under which the spacer is engaged, and said lip presents at least one rotation-preventing wedging facet which cooperates with a portion of the periphery of the spacer that is not circular.

19. (New) A collar according to claim 9, wherein the ring presents a substantially V-shaped cross-section whose tip projects from an outside periphery of the ring.

20. (New) A collar according to claim 9, wherein an inside periphery of the spacer defines a channel whose height as measured in a plane in which the bearing tabs come towards each other while the collar is being tightened, is greater than a diameter of the shank of the bolt.

21. (New) A collar according to claim 20, wherein the height of the channel is at least equal to 1.2 times the diameter of the shank of the bolt.